



## *The Greater Boston Police Council*

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May 23, 2007

The Honorable Kevin J. Martin, Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20554

RE: PS Docket No. 07-8; CC Docket No. 94-102; WT Docket Nos. 03-264; 06-150, 06-169 and 96-86; EB Docket No. 06-119.

Chairman Martin:

The Greater Boston Police Council, Inc. (GBPC) is a non-profit corporation comprised of more than 330 law enforcement and public safety agencies from across New England. The "backbone" of the GBPC is the Boston Area Police Emergency Radio Network (BAPERN) that provides regional and inter-departmental radio communications capability to 140 Member Agencies. BAPERN is the only regional public safety inter-operational radio system in Eastern Massachusetts used on a daily basis for interagency communications, and the only system capable of both wide-area and district-wide interoperable radio communications during an emergency incident.

While BAPERN allows for police radio interoperability across much of eastern Massachusetts, we understand that the nation's public safety communications systems are not interoperable and we find this unacceptable. First responders have known and experienced for years that public safety's separate systems cannot talk directly to each other. Achieving this would accomplish what Congress and the media point to after every single natural and manmade disaster – *public safety interoperability*.

With the attacks on the World Trade Center, and hurricanes Katrina and Rita, we've witnessed the extent of the country's vulnerabilities when communications are hampered. In Massachusetts, we have severe weather events including hurricanes, floods and blizzards, as well as a myriad other emergency situations that come with little or no advance warning, and we certainly want communication capabilities that a hardened Public Safety wireless broadband network would maintain. Our first responders require a communications system that will not fail us.

The FCC's planned auction of frequency spectrum in the 700MHz band presents a unique and timely opportunity to join with allied partners, both public and private, to increase the quantity of available frequencies for first responder data communications and provide an opportunity to build a wireless broadband Public Safety radio communications network.

GBPC requests that 10MHz of the 700MHz band currently scheduled for auction by the FCC under the DTV transition act should be made available under rules that require the winner of the auction to have a binding agreement with Public Safety for its participation in the National Public Safety Broadband Network as a prerequisite to receiving their license.

GBPC requests that the FCC license Public Safety's 700 MHz spectrum to a stand alone entity consisting of Public Safety leaders who will control the network and ensure it will be built to the standards of reliability and redundancy that Public Safety requires. *It is critical that the FCC place Public Safety in charge of the National Public Safety Broadband Network.*

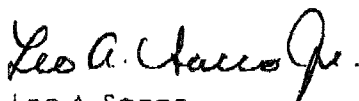
The National Public Safety Broadband Network must be built out so that it will reach rural and underserved areas. Public Safety – and those we protect – must have access to a "universal" system. Furthermore, Public Safety must have access to a satellite overlay to extend the reach of Public Safety's network to cover areas where a terrestrial build is non-economic and as a back up in times a disasters when existing infrastructures are unavailable.

The National Public Safety Broadband Network must be kept "evergreen" enabling the system to remain competitive on the commercial side and while ensuring the highest level of technology to Public Safety users.

Finally, to provide assurance that the network would have the resources to quickly construct and operate a fully deployed network, government loan guarantees are an appropriate model for supporting the public/private enterprise.

GBPC applauds the FCC for taking this important step towards creation of the National Public Safety Broadband Network and in so doing, the GBPC respectfully requests the FCC ensures through its crafting of rules that the interests of Public Safety come first. Our nation's first responders and the lives of those they protect demand nothing less.

Respectfully,



Leo A. Sacco  
Chairman, GBPC  
Medford Chief of Police



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